

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 11, 19 and 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stelljes in view of Kang. Claims 12-17 and 20 have been canceled, without prejudice and thus Claims 11 and 18-19 remain active.

Considering then the rejection of Claims 11, 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stelljes in view of Kang, Applicant notes that an advantage of the present invention is the provision for a compact fastener for bags which utilizes a minimum number of parts for effectively securing the lid of a bag in place. More particularly, as illustrated in Figure 1 of the present application, a significant advantage of the fastener is that it requires the use of only a single latch and a single engaging piece wherein the single latch is positionable on an outer surface of the main body and is oriented so as to be substantially parallel to the outer surface of the main body as illustrated and thus maintains a very low profile and is relatively inexpensive to manufacture. In addition, the invention includes a holding member 17 upon which a single engaging ring 18 is provided, the engaging ring being mounted on the holding member and the holding member being oriented substantially parallel to the lid portion of the bag, the engaging ring projecting substantially perpendicularly from the holding member 17 so as to provide a highly compact fastener utilizing a minimum number of parts and which is thus easier to manufacture than conventional fasteners such as the complex structure of the fastener shown in Stelljes.

In view of the foregoing, it is to be noted that Claim 11 has now been amended to claim that the latch mechanism 19 comprises a single latch fixed on an outer surface side of the main body and which is oriented so as to be substantially parallel to the outer surface of the main body as illustrated in Figure 1.

Claim 11 has also been amended to claim the engaging piece as comprising a single engaging ring and that the fastener includes a holding member, the single engaging ring being mounted on the holding member, the holding member being oriented substantially parallel to the lid portion as illustrated in Figure 1 and the engaging ring projecting substantially perpendicularly from the holding member as also illustrated in Figure 1.

In comparison to Claim 11 as now amended, the bag lock in Stelljes is, as illustrated in Figure 1, necessarily of a highly complex structure requiring a pair of angled catches 15 for insertion in openings in the housing for the lock. As can thus be appreciated, the relatively complex bag lock of Stelljes does not meet Applicant's claimed limitation of providing a latch mechanism with a single latch, and also does not teach a latch mechanism fixed on an outer surface side of a main body, the latch mechanism being oriented so as to be substantially parallel to the outer surface of the main body. Instead, a substantially large latch mechanism of Stelljes is mounted on the inner surface side of the bag and is oriented perpendicular to the outer surface of the main body of the bag. Applicant further notes that there is no teaching in Stelljes of a single engaging ring being mounted on the holding member and or a holding member being oriented substantially parallel to the lid portion of the bag wherein the engaging ring portion projects substantially perpendicular from the holding member, as presently claimed. As can thus be appreciated, the engaging rings in Stelljes require a pair of engaging rings 15, 15 and such are not oriented substantially perpendicular to a holding member which is oriented parallel to a lid portion of the bag, as presently claimed.

In comparison to the structure mentioned above in the present invention, only the escutcheon 17 for the lock is oriented parallel to the surface portion of the bag, contrary to the present invention as claimed.

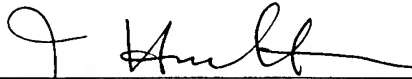
Applicant further notes that Claim 19 claims a knob 20 which comprises a release mechanism to release the engaging piece 18 from the latch member 19, the release mechanism being mounted on the latch mechanism, as is illustrated in Figure 1. Since there is no corresponding teaching or disclosure of this feature in Stelljes or any of the remaining references of record, Applicant submits that Claim 19 also merits indication of allowability.

While Kang has been cited as teaching a noise dampening coating for a striker, such comprises a striker for a glove box of an automobile and therefore clearly would not be obviously combinable with the bag lock of a portable bag in Stelljes. Moreover, Kang does not teach a latch member oriented in the manner presently claimed with respect to the main body side of a bag and does not teach a latch mechanism which rectifies the deficiencies noted hereinabove with regard to Stelljes. It is therefore submitted that Claim 11 as well as all claims dependent therefrom clearly patentably define over Stelljes and Kang, even if considered to be combinable, and also patentably define over the remaining references of record.

Accordingly, an early and favorable Office Action is believed to be in order and the same is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Registration No. 25,599

James D. Hamilton
Registration No. 28,421
Attorneys of Record

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/07)
JDH/rac

I:\ATTY\JDH\24s\248\248067US\248067US AM DUE 06.18.08.doc